## **Read Novel Loving You In Secret Chapter 1481**

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1481-"I've prepared gifts for Cece and Jennifer as well. I don't know if they're going to like them, though. Can you look for me?"

"Sure."

Vicky and Aurora were instantly engulfed in a heated discussion and forgot about Tyler.

Tyler did not interrupt them and simply stared at the smile on Vicky's face.

With the sunlight cast upon her face, her eyes shone in the way they never did when she was with him.

At that moment, he felt a painful pang in his chest again.

Aurora stayed for an hour and got up to leave.

Vicky was slightly reluctant to see her friend leave and thus offered, "Why don't I walk you out?"

"It's fine." Aurora smiled. "It's cold out there, and you can't risk catching another cold. I've been free lately, so I'll come check on you in a few days." She then turned to glance at Tyler. "Mister Hart, Vicky is still sick, so I'll have to trouble you to walk me outside."

Aurora was capable of going out on her own. It was evident she had something to say to him when she asked him to walk her out.

Tyler did not refuse.

Once downstairs, Aurora spoke, "Mister Hart, do you only know how to resort to such methods to keep Vicky by your side? You don't want her to leave, yet you're unwilling to humble yourself... Do you truly think of Vicky as a masochist?" Aurora's tone was anything but polite. "I'm aware of your immense power and cunning tactics. You could keep Vicky under your control forever as long as you wish, and if you're only interested in possessing her physically, I wouldn't comment much on it. However, if you still want her heart... Well, your current actions will only drive her further from you.

Aurora gave him a brief, sharp look and said coolly, "Take your time and think about it."

With that, she turned and left.

Later that night, it was time to tend to Vicky's wounds again.

The bruises on Vicky's body were severe with purplish patches and blotches everywhere. The closer to recovery, the more terrifying the colors of the bruises appeared to be.

Tyler held a jar of ointment, preparing to apply it to Vicky, but she refused.

"My body is almost healed. You don't need to help me with the ointment anymore." Vicky's tone was casual, devoid of emotion. "I can handle it myself."

"It's not convenient for you to do it yourself."

"It's fine. It's almost healed."

Watching the marks he inflicted on her skin, Tyler's gaze deepened as he said huskily, "I'm sorry."

Vicky chuckled softly.

"I've heard your apologies too many times. You're just like those dirtbags on TV dramas who apologize again and again, begging for forgiveness, promising to change, only to repeat the same mistakes again. The outcome never changes."

"..." Tyler fell silent.

Vicky was right. All explanations and apologies seemed incredibly feeble and impotent, especially when he looked at her wounds.

Tyler stood still. After a while, he turned to leave the room.

Vicky was in the midst of wondering if Tyler had taken her words to heart when his footsteps approached once more.

Tyler returned with a knife.

The blade was sharp. It reflected a chilling glint under the light.

Vicky was taken aback. "Tyler, what are you doing?"

"You're right," he said calmly. "Each time I hurt you, all I offer are worthless apologies. It's so meaningless. I should face appropriate punishment."

As he spoke, he lifted the knife and thrust it toward himself.

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1482-Tyler was so swift that Vicky could not stop him.

Blood tainted his white shirt, and she froze.

Tyler glanced at her and raised his arm to stab himself again.

Vicky's eyes widened. "Tyler, stop it!"

Still, the blade cut into his flash once again.

Right before Tyler could stab himself the third time, Vicky finally managed to catch his arm.

"Tyler Hart, what do you think you're doing?!' she hissed, glaring at him with bloodshot eyes. "Do you really think you can make me forgive you by torturing yourself?" Her fingers tightened around his arm as she trembled. "I won't forgive you; this will only make me hate you more!"

Tyler studied her face calmly. "Vicky, this isn't to make you forgive me."

Vicky felt disoriented and questioned sharply, "What is it, then?" Her chest heaved rapidly, her breathing erratic, and her words disjointed. "Tyler Hart, when did you stoop to using such despicable methods?!"

Blood flowed along the edge of the blade and dripped onto her hand.

Vicky's trembling intensified as her anger overwhelmed her. She was so furious that her head spun. Everything seemed to have gone black before her eyes, and she almost fainted.

Tyler noticed something was wrong and reached out to steady her. "Are you alright?"

Vicky closed her eyes briefly, her mind filled with the sight of vivid, crimson blood.

Exhausted, she said, "Please just stop tormenting me."

Tyler was stunned. He had not expected her to react this way. Looking at the knife in his hand, he suddenly realized she disliked violence and loathed weapons.

He discarded the knife, his voice subdued. "I'm sorry. I frightened you."

Vicky's face was as pale as a ghost.

"Let's bandage it first."

Tyler never intended to end his life. He only meant to punish himself, so he wielded the knife with precision. Though the wound looked severe, it would not significantly affect his daily life.

After retrieving a medical kit, Vicky did not tend to Tyler's wound. Instead, she simply sat quietly.

A flicker of disappointment flashed through Tyler's eyes as he thought to himself, 'So she isn't even willing to treat my wound?'

Vicky had not spared him more than a glance as if she was straining to restrain her impatience. Indeed, she had not forgiven him for his past misconduct, and he even scared her again.

It seemed reasonable she did not want to look at him.

Despite his logic and attempt to rationalize the situation, the pervasive sense of disappointment and heartache reminded him how delusional he had been.

Vicky caught a glimpse of Tyler as he slowly applied the ointment. He proceeded just as calmly and unhurriedly as usual, and she desperately wished she could snatch the medicine from his hand and apply it herself.

Of course, she could not do so.

Though she seemed composed, she was shaking like a leap. She could hardly hold onto the cotton, let alone apply ointment to Tyler's skin.

She did not dare to look at his wound, fearing she might cave at the sight of his injury.

Silence fell, disrupted only by the faint clinking of the medicine bottle.

After some time, Tyler's chilly voice broke the silence. "I'm done."

Vicky raised her head and saw that Tyler had neatly dressed his wound.

She finally relaxed, and it was only then she realized her back was covered in sweat.

"It's getting late. I'm going to rest," she said stiffly.

Tyler watched as she hurried away, and the look in his eyes darkened.

Later that night.

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1483-Once Tyler was sure Vicky was asleep, he left the bedroom.

Entering his study, he retrieved the knife he had put away.

Just two cuts were hardly enough to atone for the pain he caused her.

His intention was never to harm himself to gain her sympathy. He felt that he could only comprehend her agony by feeling pain himself.

Since she did not like seeing blood, he vowed she would not have to witness it anymore. With that thought in mind, he cut himself again.

Strangely, he did not feel any pain. On top of that, the lingering ache in his heart seemed to ease slightly.

'Can physical pain really alleviate heartache?' he thought.

He was tempted to try again, but instead, he used a handkerchief to clean the blood from the blade before placing it away.

He could not risk letting her discover it, or she would despise him even more.

Having stopped the bleeding, Tyler returned to the bedroom. As he drew Vicky closer, he realized his heartache had diminished somehow.

After Vicky had recovered, she returned to her work at the studio.

Tyler did not stop her. However, despite her protest, he continued to chauffeur her to and from work every day.

Surprisingly, there had not been another episode as if they were locked in a silent standoff.

Old Mister Hart remained silent, too.

In the blink of an eye, everything seemed to have returned to normal.

Days later, however, on one fateful night...

Vicky suddenly woke up. To her surprise, Tyler was nowhere to be seen.

Just as she was about to get out of bed to search for him, she heard footsteps outside the room.

Vicky's expression darkened slightly as she realized Tyler had returned.

She closed her eyes again and pretended to be asleep.

The footsteps drew nearer, and there was a gentle dip on the other side of the bed.

For some reason, Vicky caught a faint whiff of blood.

At that moment, Tyler stretched out his arm and swiftly held her close.

He could not refrain from sleeping with her. No matter how much she resisted him, he was determined to hold her in his arms while he slept.

She was momentarily puzzled, but Vicky did not think too much about it and drifted back to sleep.

It was another night. Vicky woke up and realized Tyler was absent once more.

She picked up her phone and noticed that it was one o'clock.

Having found Tyler missing two nights in a row seemed more than a mere coincidence. As she pondered about it, she heard the faint sound of the door opening, and Tyler returned.

Quickly putting her phone away, she closed her eyes and decided she would find out what Tyler was up to the next night.

The next night, Vicky stayed awake to see if Tyler would step out of the room again. She pretended to be asleep and adjusted her breathing, allowing Tyler to pull her into his embrace.

She waited for a while, but Tyler showed no signs of getting up.

Just as she was about to drift off to sleep, he moved and she instantly sobered.

Vicky remained unmoving and sensed a gaze landing upon her, checking if she was asleep.

After staring at her for a while, Tyler finally looked away and left the room quietly.

Once the door closed, Vicky silently followed him outside.

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1484-Tyler was exceptionally alert, so Vicky had to wait until he was out of the room before she dared to emerge. Peering through the peephole, she watched as Tyler headed toward the study.

Does he have some work matters to attend to?' she wondered.

With this question in mind, Vicky stepped out of the bedroom as soon as he entered the study. She stood at the entrance to the study for a few minutes, and when Tyler did not reappear, Vicky took a deep breath, turned the doorknob, and entered.

The desk lamp cast a soft, dim glow. In the reflection of the light, the knife Tyler held glistened with a chilling sheen.

Vicky, who had just entered the study, was met with a shocking sight: Tyler was holding a knife and was making incisions into his own body. >

He was solely focused on the blade in his hand, so Vicky's sudden entrance caught him off-guard, and he seemed stunned.

Vicky's eyes scanned the scene, and she instantly noticed the wounds on his body. Her eyes widened, and she questioned sharply, "Tyler, what are you doing?!"

A flicker of panic passed through Tyler's eyes. He had considered the possibility that she might think he was deranged for self-harming.

He tried to hide the knife, but before he could, Vicky swiftly walked forward. Without looking at the knife, she forcefully tore open his shirt.

An intricate web of scars covered his chest, most of them already scabbed over, and the wounds were not particularly deep. Still, they appeared overwhelmingly distressing.

"Why?" Vicky trembled. Looking into Tyler's eyes, her gaze was infused with emotions he could not decipher.

Tyler lowered his gaze and remained silent.

Furious, she repeated, "Tell me, Tyler. Why are you doing this?!"

Each time she believed he was changing for the better, reality would prove her wrong. She never imagined he would resort to self-harm.

After a moment of silence, Tyler spoke. "It's a form of punishment." He looked at her, histone calm and steady. "I won't allow anyone to hurt you, including myself."

Vicky was taken aback, her rising anger instantly extinguished. "You... You didn't have to do this."

Staring at the scars before her, tears welled up in her eyes.

It had been a long time since she last cried.

Witnessing her tears, the calmness in Tyler's gaze instantly vanished.

Instinctively, he wiped away her tears. "Don't cry."

Her tears fell upon his fingertips, and they felt almost scorching to his skin.

Unable to help himself, he reached out and pulled her into his arms.

Her body slammed into his wounds, but instead of pain, he felt oddly satisfied. The more physical pain he was put under, the better he felt.

Sensing she was pressing against his wounds, Vicky jolted in shock and tried to push him away. "Tyler, let go!"

Tyler tightened his arms around her and muttered, "I'm sorry, Vicky, but I can't let you go."

Even if he knew his presence itself caused her pain and that he would end up in pain, he refused to let go.

"Tyler, just give up... This relationship will never work."

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1485-"No way."

Unable to summon the strength to push him away, Vicky closed her eyes and leaned helplessly against his chest. The scent of blood filled her nose, and she felt devastated like she never did before.

The night was quiet and peaceful.

Vicky looked up at Tyler after tending to his wounds. "Tyler..."

"It doesn't hurt," he said. "I knew what I was doing."

Vicky's lips curled into a cold sneer. "Am I supposed to compliment you on your great skills with knives?"

"..." Tyler fell into silence.

"I'm tired of this." She looked down. "Tyler, I can't accept living with a man who tortures me when he loses control and mutilates himself when he's sober."

Tyler's heart sank.

"Let's just-"

"I won't allow it!" he shouted, interrupting her words.

His gaze darkened with malevolence and ferocity. As he looked into her eyes, he pronounced every word with intention.

"I won't allow you to entertain the idea of leaving me, ever."

Frightened by his intensity, Vicky paled and froze.

Tyler instantly realized that he had forgotten, once again, that she despised threats and coercion.

Realizing this, Tyler's tense expression eased. "Vicky, don't leave me, alright?"

His voice took on a softer, more alluring tone. The gaze he directed at her intentionally adopted a gentler quality.

He knew, deep down, what kind of man she favored.

However, he never liked pretending and wanted to reveal his most authentic self to her.

Predictably, Vicky wavered, and Tyler's eyes dimmed slightly.

He disliked this pretense, but for her, he could don the mask and become the type of person she desired.

Slowly closing the distance between them, he wore an enchanting smile and murmured, "Tell me anything you dislike about me. I'll change. I promise." He reached out to grab her hand and continued, "Vicky, promise me you won't say such things again, okay?"

Entranced, Vicky came close to nodding in agreement.

However, she glimpsed a fleeting trace of obsession in his eyes and suddenly snapped back to her senses.

She knew there were certain things about him he could never change.

"Can you really...change?" she asked.

Believing she had changed her mind, he nodded. "Yes."

"Since you believe you can change, then... Let's proceed with the divorce procedures. Once I'm certain you've truly transformed as you claim, we can consider getting married again."

The tender facade shattered instantly. The moment he heard the word 'divorce', he could not contain his anger.

"Vicky, do you really think I'm that stupid?" His gaze darkened once again, and his whole demeanor shifted." Give up on trying to fool me into divorcing you!"

Vicky had not anticipated his temper to shift so quickly. She flinched at the sight of his undisguised predatory gaze.

She chose not to further provoke him and instead averted her gaze. "It's getting late. Let's rest."

As she rose, Tyler caught her from behind and whispered huskily, "Vicky, you have fully recovered, right?"

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1486-Vicky instantly realized what Tyler meant. Before she could say anything, his kisses rained down upon her.

The next morning, as Tyler emerged from the bathroom, he spotted Vicky meticulously packing her clothes into a suitcase.

His eyes widened.

Stepping forward, he gripped her wrist and demanded," Vicky, where do you think you're going?"

Vicky raised her head, her gaze cold. "I can go anywhere, as long as I can be without you."

Tyler's eyes dimmed, and his expression turned somber." Vicky, I've told you, I won't allow you to leave..."

Vicky chuckled bitterly, interrupting Tyler without hesitation." If you only know how to force me to do things and imprison me, don't act all affectionate and respectful. Don't keep saying you'll change. The truth is that you've never respected my boundaries and have always done things I don't want you to do, regardless of how I feel." Vicky's eyes carried evident disappointment as she continued, "If those promises mean nothing to you, continue doing as you please. But if, by any chance, you have even a hint of humanity left within you, please respect my choices."

Tyler's gaze grew terrifyingly dark. "And you think I should respect you by letting you leave, divorce me, and make it so we never see each other again?" He struggled to control his emotions but ultimately failed. "If I truly did what

you said, we would have broken up for good several years ago. Would there even be a possibility for us to still be together had I not forced you into this?!"

Vicky stared at Tyler dazedly.

Realizing his emotions were getting out of control, Tyler composed himself and tried to speak in a softer tone," Vicky, aside from the divorce, I can agree to anything else you ask for."

"Is that so?" Vicky smiled faintly, her smile not quite reaching her eyes. "You said the same thing yesterday, but you still forced yourself on me."

"..." Tyler's lips twitched, but he did not bother with an explanation as his actions were inexcusable.

Observing the lack of guilt or remorse on his face, Vicky said, "1 can stop bringing up divorce."

Tyler's gaze sharpened at her words.

Pretending not to notice the change in his expression, Vicky continued, "But that's only if you fulfill what you've promised me. No one would want to be with someone who can't keep their word."

Tyler sensed the deeper meaning behind her words, and his expression darkened. "What do you want me to do?"

"It's simple." Vicky looked at her suitcase. "1 want to move out for a while."

Tyler frowned and rejected the idea without a second thought. "No way."

Vicky did not speak and simply looked at him mockingly.

Feeling like he was suffocating, Tyler said, "If you don't want to be in the same room as me, I can sleep in the guest room. It

"That's not necessary," she said.

After a few moments of silence, Tyler caved reluctantly. "If you don't want to see me, I will move elsewhere. You can stay here."

Vicky did not bargain with him and simply stared at him intently. "Are you deciding to let me leave, or are you going to make me stay?"

Tension rose in the air. Though Vicky's tone was calm, the meaning of her words was clear. She wanted to leave, and Tyler could choose to make her stay by force as he had done so many times before.

Their conflicts had escalated to a certain point, and Vicky clearly did not want to be with a man as unstable as Tyler. He knew that forcing her to do anything would only increase her reluctance to be with him.

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1487-Still, Tyler did not want to let Vicky go, feeling as though she would vanish if he allowed her to leave.

He wanted to reject her request but could not bring himself to say anything when faced with her bright eyes.

Aurora mentioned that he was pushing Vicky away, and he knew about it.

Moments later, he muttered, "Okay."

Vicky did not show any sign of joy and simply nodded before pulling her hand out of Tyler's hold and continuing to gather her belongings.

Tyler grabbed her hand once again, and Vicky turned to look at him with disappointment.

Tyler felt a slight pang in his chest but calmly spoke, "You go freshen up; I'll help you pack."

Vicky was surprised as it was challenging enough for him to let her go, so she half-expected him to regret his choice immediately. Surprisingly, he offered to help her pack instead.

After a moment's contemplation, she nodded and headed to the bathroom to shower. When she emerged, her belongings were neatly arranged in the suitcase.

"Take a look and see if there's anything else you need to bring. I'll prepare breakfast," said Tyler.

With that, he left the room.

Vicky found another suitcase and started packing a few more things. When she was done, she went downstairs.

Tyler had already set out breakfast and was waiting for her. It was a lavish spread, and judging by the dishes, it was likely he cooked them himself.

Vicky sat across from him, and they quietly enjoyed their meal.

After finishing breakfast, Tyler asked, "When are you leaving? N

"Shortly."

"I'll drive you."

Vicky considered for a moment and did not refuse.

Just as he promised, Tyler saw her off.

Vicky returned to the apartment she had lived in before their marriage. Tyler was well-informed about her activities, and Vicky had not intentionally hidden anything from him.

After helping her carry the luggage upstairs, Tyler left without staying.

In the time that followed, Vicky enjoyed the rare peaceful days. For over half a month, Tyler did not appear before her.

He sent her two messages each day-a 'good morning' and a 'good night' every day. There was no communication between them beyond that.

Observing the time, Vicky guessed that the messages were likely sent when Tyler woke up and before he went to sleep.

She was not entirely sure what kept Tyler so occupied.

However, she did not bother thinking too much about that as the hypnotherapist sent by Old Mister Hart had already arrived in Zendonia.

One day, Vicky had arranged to have dinner with Aurora. As she entered the restaurant, she heard Aurora's voice.

"Vicky, over here!"

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1488-Seeing Aurora seated by the window, Vicky walked over." When did you arrive?"

"Just now." Aurora signaled for a waiter, and they began to place their orders.

After placing their orders, Aurora studied Vicky's expression and whispered, "Vicky, how have things been between you and Tyler recently?"

Vicky did not hide anything. "I've returned to my apartment for the time being."

Aurora did not show any surprise upon hearing this. Instead, she hesitated and looked at Vicky intently.

Vicky frowned. "Do you have something to say to me?"

After a few seconds of hesitation, Aurora finally spoke," There's a talented pianist who has emerged in the entertainment circle recently. Some people have spotted her...entering and leaving the same room and location as Tyler on multiple occasions..."

This piece of news had not been made public, but it had circulated in the industry. Many had seen it happen, and a few even managed to capture a couple of photos.

Though these photos could not be published, gossip could not be contained. Even Aurora had seen a few photos, which proved just how frequently Tyler met with the female

pianist.

Vicky's gaze flickered, but she lowered her head and uttered, "Oh."

Beyond that, she showed no other emotions.

Aurora wanted to ask more questions, but seeing Vicky seemed unwilling to share or perhaps did not care much, she refrained from pursuing the matter.

At that moment, the waiter brought the beverages they ordered.

Vicky lifted her cup and was about to take a sip.

Crash!

The cup slipped from her hand and shattered when it fell to the floor. The drink splattered Vicky's clothes.

Aurora acted swiftly and produced several tissue papers." Vicky, clean yourself with these!"

Vicky stared at her trembling hand in a daze, unable to comprehend what had just happened.

"Vicky?" came a familiar voice, sounding with a hint of surprise.

Vicky looked up and saw a handsome face.

"Chris?" Surprised to see him, she asked, "Why are you here?"

Since their encounter at the bar, Vicky had not gone back to that place, nor had they contacted each other.

"I came here for a meal." Chris glanced at the shattered cup and Vicky's disheveled appearance with a frown. "Are you hurt?"

Aurora, who was wiping Vicky's clothes, paused at his words. Following Chris' gaze, she indeed noticed a faint mark on the back of Vicky's hand, seemingly caused by a fragment.

She was sitting right in front of Vicky but had not noticed it. Chris, however, noticed it from a distance, which indicated he had been observing Vicky for a while.

Aurora's gaze flickered with realization.

Vicky spotted the wound on the back of her hand as well but paid no mind to it. "It's fine. It will heal tomorrow."

Just then, the waiter seemed to have noticed the commotion and came over to check. Once he confirmed that Vicky was alright, he immediately cleaned all the shattered glass from the ground.

"Do you need to get changed?" Chris asked.

The drink was all over Vicky, and it indeed felt uncomfortable. However, Vicky obviously did not have a change of clothes with her.

"Vicky, just wait here. I'll go to the nearby mall and get you a change of clothes," said Aurora before she turned to look at Chris. "Are you Vicky's friend?"

"Yes." Chris nodded. 'My name is Chris Leonheart."

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1489-'Chris Leonheart?' Aurora thought. 'I know about Alex and Sebastian, but I haven't heard of this guy before.'

Despite her questions, Aurora did not let it show on her face and glanced at Vicky. Upon noticing that Vicky was not appalled by Chris' presence, Aurora smiled. "I'll go get Vicky some clothes. Please look after her for the time being, Mister Leonheart."

"Sure," replied Chris said with a smile.

After Aurora left, Chris looked at Vicky and asked, "Vicky, how have you been?"

Vicky was slightly uncomfortable that Chris addressed her by her name.

When they first met, Chris always addressed her as 1 President Shaw". Since she had just started her studio at the time, she could not bring herself to get used to it and told him he could address her by her name. Still, Chris refused and switched to calling her "Ms. Shaw" instead. One could easily tell he was a man who kept to himself and respected boundaries.

Thus, it felt strange that he would suddenly start calling Vicky by her first name.

"I'm fine, thank you." Her reply was polite, a mannerism that conveyed her reluctance to engage in an extended conversation with him.

Chris did not mind and instead continued, "Your husband is spending time with other women. Do you really not care at all?"

The polite smile on Vicky's face faded.

She admired Chris as a person and felt regretful about the incident where Tyler had coerced him to leave. However, this did not mean she was ready to discuss such matters with Chris.

"Vicky..."

Chris was about to speak, but Vicky interrupted him. "It's getting late. You should head back, Mister Leonheart."

Vicky addressed him by his name only when he was her assistant. She referred to him as 'Mister Leonheart' to distance herself from him.

Chris narrowed his eyes and took out his phone to bring up a video before handing his phone to Vicky. "Vicky, take a look at this."

Vicky did not want to watch, but the video had already started playing. A figure that she could recognize in her sleep appeared in the video.

As soon as she saw that figure, Vicky could not tear her gaze away.

Chris, sitting across from her, noticed her reaction right away. His gaze flickered.

The video was not long and showed a man and a woman entering a mansion together late at night. The man was tall and handsome, while the woman was beautiful and alluring.

Vicky did not recognize the woman but knew she was likely the skilled pianist Aurora mentioned.

The man beside the woman, though his face was not fully visible, was unmistakable from the suit he was wearing as Vicky designed it herself.

She felt as though she was suffocating at the sight and noted the timestamp on the video. It was indicated that this was taken last Monday night at nine o'clock.

The screen went black before Tyler and the pianist were seen leaving together in the video. Vicky checked the time again, and it was already midnight.

Two hours had passed, and they had been alone together in the same room.

At this moment, Chris' voice reached her ears again." Recently, he's been meeting this woman late at night quite frequently, and they stayed until midnight most of the time."

Vicky's gaze shifted from the video to Chris' face. As their eyes met, a subtle glint flashed in Chris' eyes.

"Did you come here just to show me this?" she asked.

Loving You In Secret Chapter 1490=-Chris looked at Vicky intently, and Vicky knew it did not matter if Chris had come to show her the photos on purpose. What mattered was that he was stating a fact.

The two fell into silence until Aurora returned with a new set of clothes. "Vicky, go ahead and get changed."

Vicky nodded and got up with the bag Aurora handed to her.

Since Chris was still around, Aurora could not follow Vicky out. She smiled at Chris and asked, "Have you eaten? Would you like to join us, Mister Leonheart?"

She was merely trying to be polite, but to her bewilderment, Chris nodded. "If it's not too much trouble, sure."

Aurora froze and maintained a polite smile. "Since Vicky has gone to get changed, why don't you go ahead and order?"

With that said, she waved the waiter over.

When Vicky emerged, Aurora and Chris were already engaged in a somewhat casual conversation.

Aurora had deduced Chris' identity and his connection to Vicky at this point and mentioned she invited Chris for dinner with Vicky. Vicky did not show any reluctance.

Once the waiter served their dishes, the three of them dined in silence.

After the meal, Chris excused himself to visit the restroom.

When Aurora went to settle the bill as they finished, she was informed that someone else had taken care of it.

By the time Chris returned, Aurora smiled and said, "I was planning to treat Vicky to a meal today, but you beat me to it, Mister Leonheart."

Chris shot her a faint smile. "Back in the day, Vicky was always the one treating me to meals. Now that I finally have a chance to reciprocate, you wouldn't have the heart to steal that opportunity from me, would you?"

Aurora was just joking with Chris and was not genuinely upset, so she said, "I'll treat you next time, then."

As they conversed, the three of them left the restaurant. Chris displayed his gentlemanly manner and asked, "Where are you staying? I'll drop you off."

Aurora glanced at Vicky and, seeing no objection from her, felt relieved. "Thank you, Mister Leonheart."

"Don't mention it."

Aurora lived relatively close by, so Chris quickly drove her home.

Once Aurora got out of the car, that left Vicky alone with Chris.

When Aurora was present, she had been able to steer the conversation and alleviate some of the awkwardness. With Aurora gone, however, silence loomed over the car.

Staring at the night sky and the fleeting scenery outside the window, Vicky broke the silence.

"You're not someone who doesn't know boundaries, and you're not one to enjoy stirring up trouble. You suddenly showed up to me today, and our meetings have always been perfectly timed to cause trouble. This can't just be a coincidence, can it?"

The car was dimly lit. Vicky sat in the back seat, unable to discern Chris' expression.

After a moment of silence, Chris spoke.